1393

A

# LETTER

FROM

# LORD de CLIFFORD

TO THE

WORTHY AND INDEPENDENT

# ELECTORS

OF THE

Town of *Downpatrick*,

Southwell (R.) Baron De Clifford

WITH

PERTINENT QUERIES

TO THE

ELECTORS OF THE COUNTY OF DOWN.

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HILLSBOROUGH:

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A

# LETTER

FROM

# LORD de CLIFFORD,

TO

The worthy and independent ELECTORS of the Town of DOWNPATRICK.

GENTLEMEN,

WHEN I took the liberty of recommending two friends of mine to you for your ſupport and protection at the approaching Election, I flattered myſelf that I ſhould not occaſion you much trouble, or that my friends would meet with any oppoſition; I was led to entertain this hope, as well from the character and reputation of the Gentlemen I recommended to you, and from the favourable reception I experienced on my firſt viſit

to this country, as from certain letters which I have in my poſſeſſion, from Lord Downſhire to Lady de Clifford, my mother, previous to the laſt general Election, ſoliciting the intereſt of my family to bring Mr. Price into Parliament.

I have already mentioned to you the purport of thoſe letters, and at the ſame time explained the only meaning which I think they convey, namely, a poſitive engagement on the part of Lord Downſhire, that Mr. Price ſhould not oppoſe my intereſt in Downpatrick, either then or on any future occaſion, upon certain conditions therein ſpecified, which conditions were fulfilled on my part; and Mr. Price's declaration in a letter to me, that he conſidered himſelf bound in honor ſtrictly to adhere to whatever terms were made for him, though ever ſo advantageous to me, and much more injurious to his intereſt than was intended.

But as the true meaning of thoſe letters has been endeavoured to be explained away, and a moſt unwarrantable oppoſition has been

ſet

ſet up againſt my friends and your wiſhes in the Borough of Downpatrick, I feel myſelf under the diſagreeable neceſſity of laying thoſe letters before you and the public, in order to juſtify my own conduct, and to prove that the aſſertions I had made with reſpect to them were founded in truth. At the ſame time I ſhall avoid mentioning any particulars but ſuch as are neceſſary to form the chain of this correſpondence, and to put this matter into the faireſt and moſt candid light.

Having heard a report, in May or June laſt, that Mr. Price intended to oppoſe my intereſt in Downpatrick at the approaching Election, I wrote to him expreſſing my ſurprize on hearing ſuch a report after Lord Downſhire had declared, " his (Mr. Price's) determination and reſolution never to give me any trouble or oppoſition in the Borough of Down, but on the contrary, to join and ſupport my family intereſt," to which Mr. Price replied to me, by incloſing a letter from Lord Downſhire to him, declaring, That " he (Lord Downſhire) never had authority from Mr. Price to enter into ſuch engagements for him, as Lord de Clifford mentioned."——Upon which I

wrote

wrote to Mr. Price, inclofing a copy of Lord Downfhire's letter to him, previous to the laft general Election, as follows:

*Hanover-Square, June 9th, 1789.*

" SIR,

" I Have feen the Duke of Beaufort and Lord Vernon, and have had the honor to wait on Lady de Clifford. I have acquitted myfelf of the commiffion you favored me with, and I think may venture to acquaint you, that my fuccefs has in a great degree anfwered my wifhes and expectations.

" Lady de Clifford received with pleafure the information I gave her of your defire to fee the connection that formerly fubfifted between Lord de Clifford's family and your's renewed; and the honorable affurances you enabled me to add of your determination and refolution never to give Lord de Clifford or his family any trouble or oppofition in the Borough of Down, but on the contrary to join and fupport his family intereft, appeared to give her great fatisfaction.

" I then

" I then mentioned your deſire to come into Parliament, and particularly by Lord de Clifford's intereſt, to whom you have the honor to be related, and that if your determination ſhould lead her Ladyſhip and my Lord's guardians to recommend you at the next general Election for the Borough of Down, you would always conſider it as the higheſt mark of confidence and friendſhip, and would be ready whenever Lord de Clifford ſhould call upon you, to give up your ſeat to any perſon whom he ſhould think proper; that although you flattered yourſelf your honor would not be ſuſpected, you were ready to enter into any engagement in writing or otherwiſe to that effect.

" Lady de Clifford heard all this with great attention and complacency, and expreſſed her ſatisfaction in the reſtoration of harmony between the two families with much perſonal civility and regard to yourſelf; ſhe aſſured me ſhe had not the moſt diſtant ſuſpicion of your honour, but at the ſame time added, that ſhe was ſure I could not be ignorant, that in matters of Election there are certain rules and maxims from which prudence forbids a departure. As I could not controvert

this

this, I thought it neceſſary to enter further into the ſubject, but took an opportunity ſoon after to ſay, that I apprehended the purport of what had dropt from her conveyed a negative with regard to a ſeat for the Borough of Down.

" She anſwered ſhe did not like that word, but that indeed ſhe much doubted, whether it would be thought proper for her and Lord de Clifford's guardians to comply with your wiſh in that reſpect.

" As near as I can recollect, this was the purport of the converſation in regard to the two objects I had in charge from you, namely, the renewal of your family connection, and your wiſh to repreſent Down upon Lord de Clifford's intereſt; but before I came away, Lady de Clifford ſaid, that as you did not mean to eſtabliſh and cultivate an intereſt in Down ſeparate from, and independant from Lord de Clifford's, but at the ſame time wiſhed to be in Parliament, ſhe was glad of an opportunity of obliging you, and therefore if I thought you would like to come in for the borough of Kinſale, a ſeat there was at your ſervice. I

anſwered,

anſwered, that ſo obliging an offer muſt be received by you with the greateſt gratitude, but that I had heard that Kinſale was a borough open to conteſt, and that your prudence and ſituation could not allow of your engaging in the expenſes of a conteſted Election; but that free from that objection, I was ſure nothing could make you more happy than to receive ſuch a favour from her Ladyſhip: ſhe ſaid ſhe would enquire, but did not apprehend there was any juſt cauſe to expect oppoſition at Kinſale, and deſired I would make you this offer. You will pleaſe to let me know what anſwer I ſhall return.

" I am, Dr Sir,

" With great truth, &c. &c.

In a ſhort time afterwards I received the following Letter from Mr. Price:

*Baginton, June 22d,* 1789.

" My Lord,

" Yeſterday I had the honour to receive your letter, and am really at a loſs to find out what expreſſions I have uſed that could be conſtrued

conſtrued into a preſent intention of mine to give oppoſition in the town of Down.

" The copy of the letter you encloſed has aſtoniſhed me, as I really do not recollect the purport of the original, (which I ſuppoſe muſt have been received) as I entirely left the management of the whole buſineſs to Lord Hillſborough. And my conduct being ever ſuperior to deſigning views, I neither kept originals or copies of any letters that might have paſſed on that buſineſs; and I am alſo very confident that it has eſcaped Lord Hillſborough's memory, the terms that letter ſeems to convey. I have taken a copy of the copy, and ſend it to him this poſt.

" * I am a little ſurpriſed that your Lordſhip ſhould ſo much miſconceive a part of a letter I encloſed

* This paragraph alludes to an obſervation in a letter of mine to Mr. Price, dated June 20th, 1789, which is as follows :—I muſt add, that from the little knowledge my Lord Hillſborough has of me, I am at a loſs to account for his reaſon for ſuppoſing, that wnen I am more known and connected with the country, the intereſt I now have there will alter. This obſervation was made upon a paſſage in a letter of Lord Downſhire's to Mr. Price, dated June 6th, 1789, which letter

enclofed to you, as for a moment to fuppofe that, Lord Hillfborough meant by what he writes, that your intereft would decreafe on being known; as I read that part of the letter it means directly the reverfe, and which I am fure he intended fhould be the conftruction, and which I think is very evident.

" I confider myfelf bound in honour ftrictly to adhere to whatever terms were made for me, tho' ever fo advantageous for your Lordfhip, and much more injurious to my intereft than was intended. And having acted towards you with unremitting honour, I think myfelf entitled to renew my requeft, and hope you will give me an anfwer as foon as you conveniently can. Already and repeatedly I have declared my wifh

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letter Mr. Price enclofed to me on the 9th of the fame month. The paffage in Lord Downfhire's letter is as follows:

" I know the ftrength that will appear on each fide, when Lord de Clifford comes to be more known and connected with this country, and you fhould think fit to exert that affection and regard, which is fo defervedly and generally poffeffed by you in our country."

for

for the preſervation of harmony now ſubſiſting between us.

" I have the honour to be your

" Obt hble ſervt

" C. PRICE."

Upon acquainting Mr. Price that I could not bring him into Parliament at the next general Election, I received a letter from him, informing me that he was determined to ſtand for the Borough of Downpatrick himſelf. In ſome ſhort time after, looking over my papers, I found the two following letters from Lord Downſhire to Lady de Clifford, on the ſame ſubject, and immediately prevailed on Mr. W. Rowley to wait upon Lord Downſhire with copies of them, as follows.

*Hanover Sq. July 9th*, 1781.

" MADAM,

" I find Mr. Price has been before hand with me in writing to your Ladyſhip, and has, I preſume, told you how happy your very kind offer to bring him in for Kinſale makes him. He tells me he prefers it to Down, though he thinks he might perhaps be more uſeful to your Ladyſhip's family, by being one of Lord de Clifford's Members for that place.

He

He authorizes me to aſſure you, that he has not, nor will have any intereſt there, but what ſhall always be at Lord de Clifford's diſpoſal. In this declaration, I venture to anſwer for him. I am ſure he is a young man of ſtrict honour, in whom your Ladyſhip may moſt ſafely confide. I underſtand, in caſe of Veſey's death, he hopes your Ladyſhip will chuſe him for Kinſale directly. I preſume you will, for it will tend to ſecure matters at the general Election. I requeſt your Ladyſhip's forgiveneſs, for interfering ſo far in buſineſs in which I can be no otherwiſe concerned, than by wiſhes to ſee every thing in the part of the world I belong to, in which Lord de Clifford's family is intereſted, go on to your Ladyſhip's entire ſatisfaction, and I have very great pleaſure in foreſeeing that it will be the caſe.

" I have the honour to be,
" With the greateſt reſpect,
" MADAM,
" Your moſt obedient, and
" Moſt humble Servant,
" HILLSBOROUGH."

The

The Second LETTER as follows:

*Hanover-ſquare*, 14 *July*, 1781.

" MADAM,

" I have received the honour of your Ladyſhip's letter of the 12th inſtant, and am happy that the reſult of my negociation is agreeable to you. Your Ladyſhip has made Mr. Price very much ſo, and you have I truſt, ſecured peace and quiet at Down to Lord de Clifford and an attached friend, who will be ever ready to obey and aſſiſt him. I will not fail to take all the care in my power to procure the Government intereſt for your Ladyſhip's friends at Kinſale. And have the honour to be, with the ſincereſt reſpect,

" MADAM,

" Your Ladyſhip's moſt humble and

" Moſt obedient Servant,

" HILLSBOROUGH."

Upon

Upon Mr. Wm. Rowley's reading the above two letters to my Lord Downſhire, he ſeemed very much aſtoniſhed—read them himſelf, and ſaid, he had not the leaſt recollection of the tranſaction.—Mr. Rowley then called upon his Lordſhip in my name, to make good his part of the engagement—obſerved, that I had fulfilled my part, and called upon him as a man of honor to perform his.

Lord Downſhire ſaid thas he never could have entered into ſuch an engagement, ſo injurious to Mr. Price's intereſt, and ſo abſurd, and added, that he would not at all interfere in the buſineſs. Mr. W. Rowley upon this went away, but ſoon after received a note from Lord Downſhire, deſiring to ſee him the next day, Mr. W. Rowley accordingly waited upon him, when his Lordſhip again declared his determination not to interfere, but aſked Mr. W. Rowley whether he had ſhown theſe letters to Mr. Price, Mr. W. Rowley replied, that he had not, but would take the firſt opportunity of doing ſo. Accordingly he ſhewed the letters to Mr. Price the next day, and called upon

Mr.

Mr. Price to fulfill the engagements contained in them. Mr. Price declared that he knew nothing of the letters, but would do whatever Lord Downſhire directed. Mr. Price at the ſame time expreſſed a wiſh that Lord Downſhire ſhould ſee the originals of theſe two letters, upon advice of which, I immediately came up from Downpatrick to Dublin, and waited on his Lordſhip with two friends of mine, his Lordſhip alſo having three friends preſent, I produced the originals of the two letters laſt above recited, which he acknowledged to be his hand writing, and alſo acknowledged, that he muſt have wrote the original of the firſt letter herein before recited.

Mr. Price being alſo preſent, was appealed to, who again declared he was ready to do whatever Lord Downſhire directed; but Lord Downſhire notwithſtanding his own letters then lay before him, ſaid that he would not interfere: I then told his Lordſhip, that if he was determined not to put a ſtop to this oppoſition, I ſhould be under the neceſſity, though at the ſame time very unwillingly, to publiſh thoſe letters, in order to juſtify my own character, and to ſatisfy my

friends

friends and the world, that what I had aſſerted with reſpect to them, was founded in truth.

You will pleaſe to obſerve, Gentlemen, that in reciting this tranſaction, I have carefully avoided making any comment whatever upon theſe letters. You will judge yourſelves of their true meaning and intent—Whether they contain the poſitive engagement which I have aſſerted they did—Whether Thoſe who acted for me at the laſt general Election, acquitted themſelves with honour, and fulfilled the conditions required on my part—And Whether Lord Downſhire and Mr. Price are warranted in the oppoſition they have ſet up to my friends in Downpatrick on the preſent occaſion.

I cannot conclude, Gentlemen, without expreſſing my warmeſt acknowledgments to you for the very kind and honourable ſupport you have given my friends, whom I recommended to your protection, and who, I hope, will prove worthy of your choice. The very flattering inſtances of politeneſs and regard, which you have ſhewn me ſince my arrival in Downpatrick, will remain indelibly impreſſed on my heart; and I beg leave to

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assure you, that in all situations, the real interest and prosperity of the town of Downpatrick shall be the constant and peculiar object of my care.

" I have the honour to be,

" With the highest respect and esteem,

" GENTLEMEN,

" Your most obliged, and

" Most faithful humble Servant,

" de CLIFFORD."

TO

TO THE

# *GENTLEMEN, CLERGY and FREEHOLDERS*

OF THE

## COUNTY OF DOWN.

GENTLEMEN,

BEFORE you engage your votes and interests to my Lord HILLSBOROUGH for the next Election, I think that as freemen and freeholders you are justly entitled to have the following queries, fairly and candidly answered—as the Marquiss of Downshire and his son *are one*, Answers from either of them shall be considered satisfactory.

I. Was it, my Lord, a sincere wish to secure the peace of the county that delayed so long your address to your constituents?

II. Does

II. Does your Lordſhip think, as a fair man, that the peace of the county will be more effectually ſecured, by the preſent deſperate ſtep you have adopted of ſtanding the poll ſingle, than it would have been had you cloſed with Mr. Ward's or Mr. Stewart's overtures, concerning the nature of which there is at preſent ſuch a flagrant difference of opinion?

III. If your Lordſhip is as really anxious for the preſervation of the peace of the county as you pretend, would it not be better ſecured by your withdrawing all claims and rights, however great, on the preſent occaſion—and would not the county feel more benefitted, and more obliged to you for ſuch an act of ſelf-denying virtue, than it can receive ſervice by the uninterrupted ſacrifice of your vote at the unhallowed ſhrine of every corrupt miniſter?

IV. Had Mr. Ward given your Lordſhip the diſpoſal of a ſeat at Bangor, for one of your hungry *Greeks*, would you have thought it inconſiſtent with your duty to the county to have accepted it?

V. But

V. But had you coalesced with Mr. Ward, would you not then have treated the son (Mr. Stewart) in the same *modest dignifed* manner that you treated the father (the present Lord Londonderry) at the last Election?

VI. Had the peace of the county been devoutly wished for by your Lordship or the Marquiss of Downshire, would either the *pious son* or the *more pious father* have fomented an unjust, dishonourable opposition to the interests and wishes of a young nobleman of ancient family, and great respectability in his own town?

VII. If Lord de Clifford had favoured your Lordship with a second disposal of a seat at Kinsale, would the Marquiss of Downshire have so wantonly disturbed the peace in Downpatrick, which he was *sworn to keep as governor of the county*, and which *he ought to have kept as a man of honour?* Or should he have made *religion* a stalking-horse for base policy?

VIII. Can the son of a man whose favourite object for years has been the degrading of a great and

and respectable county to the contemptible character of a borough, wish sincerely for its independence?

IX. Is your Lordship a true friend to the real freedom and independence of Ireland?

X. Was it an ardent love for the independence of the Irish constitution as established in 1782, that made you undertake a long journey of many a mile, in cold weather, at the time of the regency?

XI. If your Lordship answers in the affirmative, will Mr. Grattan, the father of our independence, second you?

XII. Is it anxiety for the vindication of the insulted honour of your country, that always induces your honourable friends the Reilys, Johnstons, and the Montgomeries, to take such an active honest part in reprobating the corrupt system, which has been of late adopted for the carrying on the affairs of this country?

XIII. Was

XIII. Was it the *great and ſubſtantial intereſt* of your country, that induced your Lordſhip to deſert her cauſe in the laſt glorious ſeſſions of parliament?

XIV. It is from a recollection of your Lordſhip's and your Friends ſtrenuous ſupport of the *accurſed propoſitions*, that you preſume to declare to an enlightened people, that you are a friend to the commerce and manufactures of Ireland?

When your Lordſhip, or your moſt noble parent has anſwered the above Interrogataries, I will, with the bleſſing of God, (for I too have religion as well as the Marquis) take the Liberty of ſupplying you with a few more, extracted from your famous Manifeſto to the county.

FINIS.

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